

S E R M O N

ON THE
GRADUAL ADVANCES,
AND
DISTINCT PERIODS
OF

Divine Revelation.

By THOMAS BOWLES, D. D.

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SE R M O N

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Remembrance of the Foundation
of the Church of the Holy Trinity
in the City of London

By Thomas Bowyer, D.D.

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By THOMAS BOWLES, D. D.

Teacher of a private Grammar-School at Brackley in Northamptonshire.

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THE
Gradual Advances, and Distinct Periods,
OF
Divine Revelation,
IN THE
Several Ages of the World.

HEB. I. 1, and Part of the
2 Verse.

*God, who at sundry Times, and
in divers Manners, spake in
time past unto the Fathers by
the Prophets, hath in these
last Days spoken unto us by
His Son.*

MAN, the last great Regard of the
Creator, was endued with such
Reason and Understanding, which
might comprehend the Design of the Divine
Wisdom, enjoy the Benefits of His Goodness,
and employ itself in the Celebration of His
Power. The Hopes of Nature were then
lively and vigorous, and He had before Him
the Prospect of all that Felicity to which He
had created, to encourage and support His

A

Obedi-

Obedience. But as soon as He unhappily disobey'd the Precept of the Almighty, by yielding to the first Temptation that was offer'd Him to the Ruin of Himself and His Posterity, there immediately appear'd great Disorders and Defects in all the Powers of Human Nature ; the Understanding was dark, the Will weak and yet obstinate, the Appetites irregular, and the Passions strong. So that Man, though endowed with noble Faculties, is at the same time incumber'd with bodily Propensions. The *Carnal Mind* keeps up an eternal War against Reason, and nourishes an Army of unruly mutinous Passions on purpose to rebel against, and too often lead their Sovereign into a Dishonourable Captivity. The Image of God being thus defaced and impair'd, there became a speedy Necessity for a Divine Revelation in this degenerate State, which might convey new Hopes in the room of those that were extinguish'd, re-instate faln Man once more within the Reach of Salvation, and raise Him to those Degrees of Divinity He had lost.

Hence God was pleased to reveal His Will to *Adam*, to *establish His Covenant with Noah*, and to enlarge and re-establish it with *Abraham* upon farther Promises and Assurances. And Two Thousand Years after, when the Period of Life was so contracted, that Tradition could no longer be depended upon with safety, He then raised Mankind something higher, and wrote His Law by His

ps. 78. 5. *Servant Moses, which He commanded the Israelites*
6, 7, 8. *that They should make known to their Children*

Children. That the Generation to come might know it, even the Children which should be born; who should arise and declare it to their Children: That they might set their Hope in God, and not forget the Works of God; but keep His Commandments: And might not be as their Fathers, a Stubborn and Rebellious Generation; a Generation that set not their Heart aright, and whose Spirit was not stedfast with God. And, for the clearing and enforcing of this Revelation, Prophets were inspired at sundry Times, and in divers Manners.

But, This was only a Typical State, a shadow of good Things that were to come, that That People might be thereby convinc'd, that their own Institution was not to continue for ever, and that there was a more perfect Dispensation, which They were to expect, and which was to rise, as it were, out of the Ashes of This. And That is the Evangelical State, which is the Close and Completion of all; in which the Rites of the Law were fulfill'd, the Types answer'd by the Anti-Types, and all the Blessings and Promises given to God's Ancient People finally Accomplish'd, in the Illustrious Manifestation of the Holy and Blessed Seed. So that God, who at sundry Times, and in divers Manners, spake in time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last Days spoken unto us by His Son.

In discoursing upon these Words, I shall proceed in the following Manner.

First, I shall endeavour briefly to set before You the Existence of a God. Se-

Secondly, That at sundry Times, and in divers Manners, God spake in Time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets.

Thirdly, That God hath in these last Days spoken unto us by His Son. And,

Fourthly and Lastly, That the Evangelical Revelation of the Son of God is highly advantageous to the State and Condition of Man.

First then, I shall endeavour briefly to shew before You the Existence of a God.

The Images of God are so lively, so many and so legible in His Works, that the plainest Man alive may read and understand them. What a vast Field for Contemplation is here open'd! (*) There are such Regions of Matter about us, in which every Particle carries with it an Argument of God's Existence. Both the Beginnings and the Ends of Things, the Least and the Greatest, all conspire to shew that there is some Almighty Designer, an Infinite Wisdom and Power at the Top of all these Things. And hence it is that St. Paul tells the Romans, That the invisible Things of God are clear from the Creation of the World, even His eternal Power and Godhead, so that they were without Excuse. And the Royal Psalmist has very beautiful Strokes to the same Purpose in an exalted Strain: *The Heavens declare the Glory of God; and the Firmament sheweth His handy Work. Day unto Day uttereth Speech, and Night unto Night sheweth Knowledge. There is no Speech nor Language, where their Voice*

Psal. 19.

(*) See Strabo, Lib. 17.

not heard. Their Line is gone out through all the Earth, and their Words to the End of the World: in them hath He set a Tabernacle for the Sun, which is as a Bridegroom coming out of his Chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong Man to run a Race. His going forth is from the End of the Heaven, and his Circuit unto the Ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the Heat thereof.

Experience shews us, that there is a Contrivance and a Respect to certain Reasons and Ends. And since we cannot suppose the Parts of Matter by Agreement to have taken their respective Posts, and pursued constant Ends by certain Methods and Measures concerted, there must be some other Being, whose Wisdom and Power are equal to such a mighty Work. There must be some Almighty Mind, who lays the Causes of Things so deep, prescribes them such uniform and steady Laws, bestines and adapts them to certain Purposes, and makes one thing to fit and answer to another.

The very Contexture of our own Bodies is, by the Curiosity of its Contrivance, and by the Number and Usefulness of its Parts, a perpetual and domestick Testimony of the Existence and Wisdom of God. If we survey ourselves within as well as without, the inward Chambers of the Mind, the dark enclosures of the Heart, the capacious Province of the Thoughts, the sure and lasting Foundations of the Memory, and the curious Scenes of the Imagination; we shall soon be sensible that an Almighty and Wise Architect compos'd our whole

whole Frame, and that the Knowledge of so Artful a Contrivance, and of such Beautiful Furniture is *too Wonderful for Man*. (*) All our Faculties bear the undeniable Tokens of infinite Wisdom, and have the Characters of the divine Power and Goodness so manifestly stamp'd upon Them, that we cannot enjoy the free and perfect Use of them, without lifting up our Eyes to adore our Maker, our Tongues to glorify Him, and our Ears to give Attention to his Praise. *O Lord, how Marvellous are thy Works, in Wisdom hast Thou made Them All!* The Eyes that see, give Witness to Thee; and the Ears that hear, confirm Their Testimony. And thus all things Jointly concur to the Manifestation of the Lord their Maker, and effectually display and illustrate to Us their Great Original.

Some indeed have believed the World to have existed from all Eternity, that there were Men before *Adam*, and that several Revolutions of Ages, Empires and Religions have happen'd before those mention'd in History. But every new Invention, every strange Country, that has been lately Discover'd, are manifest Proofs of the Novelty of the World. Monuments, the most durable and unchangeable, Marbles, Coins, Inscriptions, Buildings, all proclaim aloud, The World has not been created long. The Original of almost all Inventions, even the most useful and necessary to our Subsistence and Well-Being, is well known; at least we know they are not Eternal, and that it was a long

(*) See *Galen*, Lib. 3. Chap. 10.

time before they were brought to Perfection (*). In a Word, The Eternity of the World and of Matter, is neither to be maintain'd, nor comprehended. The very Corruptions, Alterations, and perpetual Motions of Created Beings are a sufficient Argument that they had a Beginning, and that some external and superior Cause must necessarily be granted to put the Concatenation of Events in Motion, to project the Order, to connect the Causes and Effects, and to impose the Necessity. And This brings me from the Contemplation of Nature, to the Light and Assistance of Divine Revelation. Or,

Secondly, That at sundry Times, and in divers Manners, God spake in time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets.

The first and most Essential of all the Advantages of the History of the Jews, above that of other Nations, is the having God Himself for its Author, who made use of the Pen of the Sacred Historians and Holy Prophets, that were inspired with a supernatural Light, and guided in a special Manner by Him who is Infallible, and Truth

(*) — Si nulla fuit genitalis Origo
Terræ & Cœli —
Cur supra Bellum Thebanum & Funera Trojæ
Non alias Alii quoque Res cecinere Poetæ? *Lucr.*
Virgilius, Ecloga 6.
Idem, Georgicon 1:
Horatius, Lib. 1. Satyra 3.
Tacitus, Annalium 3.

itself,

itself, and vouchsafed by express Revelation to give a Law to their whole Nation.- The Delivery of this Dispensation was attended with Glorious and Pompous Miracles, and was publickly confirm'd by the Amazing Testimony of Signs, and Wonders, and mighty Works, Thunderings and Lightenings, the Sound of Trumpets, and the Voice of Words signally witnessing to the Terror and Majesty of the Divine Appearance in the Presence of a whole Nation.

Moses, the first and principal Author of the Jewish History, took in hand to write the Account of the whole Matter of Fact relating to this Revelation, on which the Polity of a whole Nation was founded, at a time when no Body could be ignorant of the Truth of the chief Transactions, even in the Life-time of all those who were Witnesses of them. And, in order to render His History the more full and compleat, He goes back to the first Original of Things, and carries it down from the Creation of the World, to His own Time. And there are many considerable, and very strong rational Proofs, drawn from Nature, Reason and Observation, and confirm'd by the Concurrent Testimonies of Profane and unquestionably Unprejudiced Authors, which make it exceedingly probable, and very credible, (separate from the Authority of Revelation,) that the Particulars of His History, and some even of the minutest Circumstances, are true Relations of Matter of Fact; and concerning which we

an now have no more Reason to doubt,
 than of any History of any ancient Mat-
 ter of Fact in the World. (1) The Histo-
 ry of the Creation, with the manner of the
 formation of the Earth out of a Chaos;
 (2) The

(1) Φοινίκων διολογία ἢ ἥ ὅλων ἀρχὴν ἀποπείθεται
 ἀπὸ ζοφώδους, καὶ χάθ' ὁλοκρῶν, ἐρεβώδους. Ταῦτα δ'
 ὁ ἔπειτα καὶ διὰ πολὺν αἰῶνα μὴ ἔχον πύρεα. ὅπ' ὅ,
 αἰσιν, ἡγεσθὴ τὸ πνεῦμα ὅπ' ἰδίων ἀρχῶν καὶ ἐγένετο
 ἡ γένεσις, ἡ πλοκή ἐκείνη ἐκλήθη πύρεα. αὐτὴ δ' ἀρχὴ
 ἰστοῦ ἀπάντων. αὐτὸ δ' ἐκ ἐγένετο ἢ αὐτὸ κτίσιν. καὶ
 ἢ αὐτὸ συμπλοκῆς τῶ πνεύματος ἐγένετο Μῶ. τὸ
 πύρεα φασὶν ἰλῶν, οἱ δ' ὅδε τῶδους μίξεως σῆψιν. καὶ ἐκ
 αὐτῆς ἐγένετο πᾶσα σπορὰ κτίσεως καὶ γένεσις, ὅπ' ὅλων.
 Hesiod. Lib. I. Præparationis, Capite X.

Virgil expresses himself to the same purpose,
 Tum durare solum & discludere Nerea Ponto
 Cæperit, & rerum paulatim sumere Formas.

Ecloga VI:

Ἦτοι μὲν πᾶσι καὶ χάθ' ἔγενετ', αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
 ἰὶ εὐρύς τ' ἐστ' ὅδε ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ
 ἀνάντων, οἱ δ' ἔχουσιν ἄρ' ἐν νιφάδεσσιν Ὀλύμπου
 ἀρταρὶ τ' ἡγεσθὴ μυχῷ χθονὸς εὐρυοδείης.
 δ' ἔρεος δὲ καὶ ἄλλους ἐν ἀθανάτοισιν ἀποῖσι,
 ἀνάντων τε δὴν πάντων τ' ἀνθρώπων
 ἀνάνται ἐν σῆδεσσιν νόον καὶ ὅπ' ἔρεος βελῶν.
 καὶ χάθ' δ' ἔρεος τε μάλαν δ' ἐν Νύξ' ἐγένοντο.
 ἀνάνται δ' αὐτ' Αἰθέρ' τε καὶ ἡμέρα ἐξεγένοντο,
 ὅς τ' ἐκ κοσμομένης, ἔρεος φιλότῃ μῆτις.

Hesiod. in Theogonia.

The same Particulars agreeable with *Moses*, are related
Ovid.

Ante Mare & Terras, & quod regit omnia, Cælum,
 Unus erat toto Naturæ vultus in Orbe,
 Quem dixere Chaos, &c. Lib. primo *Metamorphoseon.*
 Principio Cælum & Terras camposque liquentes,

B

Lucen-

(2) The Paradisiacal State of Innocence, and the Loss of it by Sin; (3) The Particular

Lucentemque Globum Lunæ, Titaniaque Astra
Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per Artus
Mens agitat molem, & magno se corpore miscet;
Inde Hominum Pecudumq; Genus, vitæq; Volantum
Et quæ Marmoreo fert Monstra sub æquore Pontus.
Igneus est illis Vigor & cœlestis Origo
Seminibus. *Virgil. in Sexto Eneidos.*

Ἀλλ' ὑμῖς μὲν πάντες ὕδωρ καὶ γαῖα γένησθε.

Homerus Iliados H.

(2) Τὸ παλαιὸν πᾶν τ' ἦν ἁλὸς καὶ ἀλῶν πᾶσι
καθάπερ καὶ νῦν κόινως· καὶ κρῖναι δ' ἔρρεον, αἱ μὲν ὕδα-
τος, γάλακτος δ' ἄλλαι· καὶ ὁμοίως αἱ μὲν μέλιτι
αἱ δ' ὄινῃ, πνέει δ' ἐλαίῃ· ὑπὸ πλησμονῆς δ' οἱ ἄνθρωποι
καὶ τετυφῆς, εἰς ὕδωρ ἐξέπιπον. Ζεὺς δ' ἐμύσησε τὴν
σάβανον, ἠφάνισεν πάντα, καὶ διὰ πόντον τὸ βίον ἀπὸ τῆς
Calanus Indus, apud Strabon. Lib 15.

(3) Δευκαλίωνα καὶ Πειριεράν ἐκ τῆς ἁλὸς ἀφί-
κνυνται, καὶ γένεσθαι, καὶ κρῖναι μὲν εἶσω πάλιν ἐν
μῆνι, εὐδίας δ' ἀποπτάσαν. *Plutarch. Libro, Utrum*
Terrestria an Aquatica plus habeant solertiae.

Οἱ μὲν ὦν πολλοὶ Δευκαλίωνα καὶ Σκυθία τὸ ἐξ ὧν
σώσθαι λέγουσι τῶτον Δευκαλίωνα, ὅτι τῷ τὸ πᾶν
ὕδωρ ἐγένετο· Δευκαλίονος δὲ πρεῖς, λόγον ἐν Ἑλλή-
σπονδοις, τὸ Ἑλληνες ἐκ τῆς ἀπὸ λέγουσι· Ὁ δὲ μῦθος
ἔχει· ὅτε ἡ γαῖα, οἱ νῦν ἄνθρωποι, ἐκ τῆς ἀπὸ
ἀλλ' ἐκείνη μὲν ἡ γαῖα πάντες ὄλοντο· ἔπειτα δὲ γένε-
ται Δευτέρη τις, τὸ αὐτὸς ἐκ Δευκαλίονος καὶ Πει-
ριεράς· ἐκείνη δὲ πρεῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων πᾶσι μύθοντος
ὕδωρ καὶ κρῖναι, ἀθέμιστα ἔργα ἐπελάοντο, ἔπ-
ορκια ἐφύλασσον, ἔπ-ζώντες ἐδίχοντο, ἔπ-κατέων
κοντο, ἀνθ' ὧν σφίσι ἡ μεγάλη συμφορὴ ἀφίκατο. αὐ-
τὸν γὰρ πολλὸν ὕδωρ ἐκιδίδει, καὶ ὁμοῦ μεγάλοι ἐγένοντο
καὶ οἱ ποταμοὶ κατέβησαν μέζοντες, καὶ ἡ ἀπὸ τῆς

the general Deluge ; (4) The Progeny of the Sons of Noah, their Dispersion, and the Division of Tongues upon their foolish Attempt

ἐν αὐτῇ, ἐς ὃ πάντα ὕδωρ ἐγένετο, καὶ πάντες ὄλκοντο·
 ευκαλίων δὲ μὲν ἄνθρώπων ἐλίπετο ἐς γενεὴν Δευ-
 κλίων, εὐκαλίας τε καὶ τῆς εὐσεβείας εἴσευε. ἡ δὲ οἱ σωτηρίῃ
 ἐγένετο. λαβὼσα μεγάλην, καὶ αὐτὸς ἔχε, ἐς πάντην
 τριεκάσας παῖδας τε, καὶ γυναῖκας αὐτοῦ, ἐσέβη· ἐσ-
 κίοντι δὲ οἱ ἀπίκοντο σύες, καὶ ἵπποι, καὶ λεόντων γέ-
 να, καὶ ὄφεις, καὶ ἄλλα, ὅκωσιν ἐν γῇ τέμνονται, πάντα ἐς
 ἕνα· ὃ δὲ πάντα ἐλίκατο. καὶ μὲν ἔκ ἐσίνοντο· ἀλλὰ
 οἱσι μεγάλην διόθεν φιλήν ἐγένετο· καὶ ἐν μὲν λαβὼσα
 αὐτοὺς ἐπλευσαν, ἔσε τὸ ὕδωρ ἐπικράτσει. τὰ μὲν Δευ-
 κλίων πρὸς Ἕλληνας ἐσρέεσι. τὰ δὲ ἀπὸ τέτε, λέ-
 γεται λόγος ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐν τῇ ἱερῇ πόλει μεγάλως ἀξι-
 ουμάται, ὅτι ἐν τῇ σφετέρῃ χώρῃ χάσμα μέγα ἐγένετο,
 τὸ σύμπαν ὕδωρ καταδέξατο. Δευκαλίων δὲ, ἐπὶ
 αὐτῷ ἐγένετο, βωμὸς τε ἔδειτο, καὶ νηὸν ἐπὶ τῷ χάσματι
 ἔθηκεν ἄγιον ἐσήσατο. ἐγὼ καὶ καὶ τὸ χάσμα εἶδον, καὶ ὅτι ὑπὸ
 τῇ νηὶ κάρτα μικρὴν. εἰ μὲν ὦν πάλαι καὶ μέγα ὄν, νῦν
 ἵκναι ἐγένετο, ἔκ οὗτω τὸ ἐγὼ εἶδον μικρὴν δεῖ. σῆμα
 τῆς ἐσέβης τόδε φησὶν. δις ἐπείσευτε ὅκα θαλάσσης
 ὕδωρ ἐς τὴν νηὶν ἀπικέσται. φέρουσι καὶ ἐκ ἱερῆς μὲν· ἀλλὰ
 ἅπαντα Συρίην καὶ Ἀραβίαν, καὶ πύρην τῆς Εὐφράτης πολλοὺς
 ἄνθρωποι ἐς θαλάσσαν ἔρχονται καὶ πάντες ὕδωρ φέρουσι·
 ὅ, φῶτα μὲν ἐν τῇ νηὶ ὅκα χέουσι, μετὰ καὶ ἐς τὸ
 χάσμα κατέρχεται, καὶ δικάται τὸ χάσμα μικρὸν ἐν ὕδα-
 τος χῆμα πολλόν. τὰ καὶ ποιέοντες Δευκαλίωνα ἐν τῇ
 νηὶ πύρην νόμον δεῖξαι λέγουσι, συμφορῆς καὶ ἐσεργασίας
 σῆμα ἔμμεναι. Ὁ μὲν ὦν ἀρχαῖος αὐτοῖς λόγος ἀμφὶ
 τῇ νηὶ, τοῖος καὶ δεῖ. Lucianus.

(4) Ἐν τῇ δὲ οἱ λέγουσι τὰς φῶτας ὅκα γῆς ἀνασχίν-
 τας ῥώμην καὶ καὶ μεγέθει χαυνωθῆναι καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καταφρο-
 νήσαντας

tempt at Babel; (5) The Burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, which were made so dreadful

an

νήσαντας αμείνονας εἶ), πύργων πύρσιν ἡλίκατον ἀίρεται, ἵνα νῦν Βαβυλων ἐξῇ. ἦδ' ἡ δ' αὖτε εἶ) τῷ ἐρετῇ. καὶ τὰς ἀνέμους βοηθούσας ἀνατρέψαι καὶ αὐτοῖσι τὸ μυχάνημα. οὗ δ' ὅτα ἐρείπα λέγει Βαβυλῶνα. τίς δ' ἐν τῇ ὁμολόγησιν ἐκ δ' ὧν πολὺθεν φωνὴν ἐνέεικαται. μετὰ τὴν Κρήνην καὶ Τιτῆνι συστῆναι πόλιν. Eusebius ex Abydeni profert Lib. IX. Præparationis Capite 14. Et Cyrillus Libro 1. contra Julianum. Homerus Odysseæ Λ. Ovidius 1 Metamorphoseos.

Affectasse ferunt Regnum cœleste Gigantes. Virgilius Georgicon 1. Et Lucanus Lib. VII.

(5) ὅς τ' ἀπὸ τῆς πύργου τῆς ἐμπυρος ὦν, καὶ δ' αὖτε ποιεῖ τα σῶματα καὶ αἰοικύνταν ἐπ' ὅσα καὶ παντὶ ὀλιγοχρόνια. Diodorus Siculus Lib. XIX. post Lacus Asphaltitæ Descriptionem.

Τῷ δ' ἐμπυρῶν τ' ἡρώων εἶ) τὰ ἄλλα τεκμήρια φέρονται πολλά. Καὶ γὰρ πύργος τῆς ἐπικραυμένης δεικνύσας τραχίως καὶ Μακάδα, καὶ σύραγμα πολλαχῶς, καὶ γὰρ τεφερώδη, καὶ γὰρ τῆς πύργου ἐκ λισσάδων λεισομένης, καὶ δ' αὖτε πύργου ποταμὸς ζέωντας, καὶ τοικίας τῆς ἀνατρεφόμενης σπόραδην ὥστε πύργου τοῖς θρυλλομένοις καὶ τῷ χωρίῳ, ὡς ἄρα ὡκύνῃ ποιεῖ τειχεύειν πόλιν καὶ τῷ πόλει, ὦν τῆς μὲν πόλεως Σοδόμων σὺζοιτο κύκλῳ ἐξήκοντά τε καὶ ἑκατὸν ὑπὸ σεισμῶν καὶ καὶ ἀναφυσμάτων πυρὸς καὶ θερμῶν ὑδάτων ἀσφαλιωδῶν καὶ καὶ θεσιδῶν λίμνη καὶ πύργου καὶ πύργου πύργου γίνονται. αἱ πόλεις αἱ μὲν καταποθεῖν, αἱ δ' ἐκλείπουν οἱ δ' ἀνάμνησιν. Strabo Lib. XVI. post Asphaltitæ Descriptionem.

Haud procul inde Campi, quos ferunt olim uberrimis magnisque urbibus habitatos, fulminum Jactu arsisse & manere vestigia, terramque specie torridam, vix frugiferam perdidisse. Nam cuncta sponte edita aut manu sata, sive herba tenuis aut flore, seu solitam speciem adolevere, atra & inania velut in Cineribus vanescunt. Tacitus Historiarum V.

For a farther Illustration of this Piece of Antiquity, I shall subjoin the Authority of One, who Himself took View of those prodigious Waters of the *Dead-Sea*, near which those Cities were anciently Situated : Coming (says He) within about Half an Hour of the *Dead-Sea*, we found the Ground uneven, and varied into Hillocks; And these perhaps were the Pits at which the Kings of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* were overthrown by the Four Kings. *Gen. 14. 10.*

The *Dead-Sea* is enclosed on the *East* and *West* with exceeding high Mountains; on the *North* it is bounded with the Plain of *Jericho*, on which Side also it receives the Waters of *Jordan*; On the *South* it is open, and extends beyond the Reach of the Eye. It is said to be Twenty-four Leagues Long, and Six or Seven Broad.

On the Shore of the Lake are to be found a Black sort of Pebbles, which being held in the Flame of a Candle, soon burns, and yields a Smoak of an Intolerable Stench. It has this Property, that it loses only of its Weight, but not of its Bulk, by Burning. The Hills bordering upon the Lake, are said to abound with this sort of Sulphureous Stones.

As for the *Bitumen*, for which the Sea had been so famous, it is gather'd near the Mountains on both Sides in great Plenty, and it exactly resembles Pitch, and cannot readily be distinguish'd from it, but by the sulphureousness of its Smell and Taste.

The Water of the Lake is very limpid, and salt to the highest Degree; and not only salt, but also extream bitter and nauseous.

Heaps of Ruins, the Remains of those Cities anciently situated in this Place, have been actually seen; and, upon a diligent Survey of these Waters, several Pillars, and other Fragments of Buildings have been discern'd, and confidently attested.

As for the Apples of *Sodom*, so much talked of, they are neither to be seen, nor heard of thereabouts : Nor is there any Tree to be seen near the Lake, from which one might expect such a kind of Fruit. So that there may be a greater Deceit in this Fruit, than that which is usually reported of it; and its very Being, as well as its Beauty may be a Fiction.

Mr. Maundrel's Journey from *Aleppo* to *Jerusalem*.

an Example of the divine Vengeance ; (6) The Call of *Abraham* out of the Land of the *Caldees* ; All these are severally and distinctly related, in an Exact Concurrence with *Moses*, by the Ancientest Phœnician, Indian, Greek and Roman Writers. (7) And many of the Particulars of the Life of *Moses* are in the same manner recorded, (8) and are confess'd by *Julian* himself.

(9) The other Historical Books of the Jews, stand upon the Foundation of the same Authority with the Writings of *Moses* : And in short, nothing can be more serious, nothing more grave, than those who wrote

(6) Ματὰ τὸ ἡ κατακλυσμὸν διέφυγεν γενεὰ ὅσα χαλδαῖες τις ἦν δίκαιος ἀνὴρ μέγας καὶ τὰ ἔργα ἐμπνευστοῦ
Josephus Antiquæ Historiæ, Lib. 1. Cap. 8.

(7) Dux igitur Exulum factus, sacra Ægyptiorum furto abstulit : quæ repetentes Armis Ægyptii, domum redire tempestatibus compulsi sunt : itaque Moses Deum invocans, antiquam Patriam repetitam, Montem sinan occupavit.
Justinus ex Trogo Pompeio de Mosi.

Judaicum ediscunt & servant & metuunt Jus,
Tradidit Arcano quodcunque Volumine Moses.

Juvenalis.

Ταύτη καὶ ὁ ὅλος Ἰουδαίων θεομωδία, ἧς ὁ πῦρ ἀνὴρ, ἐπειδὴ ἡθεὶς δύνανται καὶ ἡ ἀξία ἐχρῆται καὶ ἐξέφηνεν, ὡς ἐν τῇ ἐκβολῇ γράφας τὸ νόμον. ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς, φησὶ· τί ; γένεσθαι φῶς καὶ ἐγένετο. γένεσθαι καὶ ἐγένετο. *Dionysius Longinus de Sermonis Sublimitate.*

(8) Περιστάμην ὁ ἱερεὺς βασιλεὺς καὶ δύνανται παρηγοῖαται πῦρ δὲ, φησὶν, ἡ χάρις ὡς περὶ ἐπὶ Μωσέως τὰς δυνάμεις ἀναλίσκον· ἃ παρὰ τὴν ἐπὶ Μωσέως ἐγένετο. *Julianus in Libro Cyrilli decimo.*

See *Stillingfleet's Origin. Sacrae, Lib. 3. Cap. 5.*
Bocharti Phaleg, & Vossius de Idololatria.

(9) See *Grotius de Veritate Relig. Christ. Lib. 3. Cap. 1.*
them

them; or rather I should say, nothing can be more wise, nothing more true, and more to be revered than the Spirit of God, the chief and principal Author of them; whose Union, Light and Guidance shines throughout, from one End to the other.

But *fundry* and *diverse* were the *Manners* in which God, out of a great Tenderness for the House of Israel, *Spake in time past unto the Fathers*. He raised up a Succession of Prophets among them, who were as so many Harbingers and Fore-runners of that Great Redeemer, who in the Oeconomy of our Redemption, was gradually to unfold to Mankind, the *Great Mystery of Godliness*. And, Whenever it was necessary to punish the People for their Disobedience, they were forewarn'd of the Things that were to befall them, their Calamities were Prophetically describ'd to Them, that they might know, that it was the very Hand of God, of their own God, that was upon Them. Thus *He shewed His Word unto Jacob, His Statutes and His Judgments unto Israel*.

One Prophet builds upon another, and plainly shews a uniform Agreement in One spirit. And, What can yield a more Delightful Prospect than Prophecy and Completion? When the Events of things thus directly answer to their Predictions, they then mutually advance each others Strength and Beauty. And what can this foretelling of Accidental Events be, but a Wisdom that can be derived from none but God? And to see such Events come to pass, is the strongest Proof

Proof that can be desired by Man. 'Tis like the Agreement of two Tallies, that are kept in diverse, in Adversaries Hands. It would be tedious, as well as needless, to give a particular Detail of the *Prophecies*; I shall therefore content my self briefly to observe, that the fulfilling of the Ancient *Prophecies*, in the *Messiah*, shines so conspicuously, that it is absolutely impossible, that a Mind free from Prejudice should not be affected with these Marks of Truth and Sincerity. (1) For He came into the World with all the Solemnities of Types and Prophecies, which He compleatly answered in the several Stages of His Life, Death, and Resurrection, *fulfilling all things, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Him.* And, in Conformity to these Prophecies, the Jews generally entertain'd themselves with the Expectation of the Coming of a *Messiah* into the World at the very time of His Appearance. 'Twas it was, that not only *Simeon*, and *Anna* the Prophetess, but the whole Nation of the Jews were in earnest Expectation of his Coming and waited for the Consolation of Israel, and looked for Redemption in Jerusalem, thinking the Kingdom of God should immediately appear, that is, the Kingdom of the *Messiah*. And

* Luke 2.

37.

* *Anna* the Prophetess had attended at the Temple in Fasting and Prayer, to wait His

(1) See Bp Chaundler's Defence of Christianity, from the Prophecies of the Old Testament, Chap. 2. Sect. 1.

Appear

Appearance. And this was the unanimous Belief, and the settled Judgment of the Chief Priests, the Scribes, and the Learned in their Law; of Such, who made the Study of the Scriptures their chief Business, and who were Depositories of the Traditionary Explications of the Prophets. (*) *Philo*, a Jew of *Egypt*, a little ancients than *Josephus*, and Co-temporary with Christ, a Man of great Credit and Authority in his Nation, and of high Trust at *Alexandria*, gives us plain Declarations of the Hope of *Israel*, concerning the Promised King.

Herein the Samaritans agreed with the Jews, tho' through their mutual Hatred, and Want of Intercourse in Civil Matters, they divided from them in many Other Points. (1) *Genesis* From (1) *Jacob's* Prophecy, and again from 49-10. (2) *David's* Psalms, one of the Titles of the (2) *Psalms* Messiah was known to be, ὁ ἐρχόμενος, *He that* 118. 26. Cometh. By this Name the Jews spake of (3) *John* Him, (3) *The Christ that should come into the* 11. 27. World: and by the same Name the Samaritan and 5. 14. mentions Him, (4) *The Messiah that Cometh.* (4) *John* 4. 25.

But neither to *Judea* nor *Samaria* was this Hope of *Israel* confined, for there was the same common Origin of the like Expecta-

(*) *Philo de Prom. & Pan. p. 923. Vit. Mosi II. p. 660.*

Ἀλλ' οὐ μὲν τῷ παρόντι ταῦτ' ἔστιν ἐνχαλ. γνήσιος αἰς ἡμεῶν πύθω, καὶ ἔργα ἀφ' ἐνδύσεως, τῷ δὲ παρόντι αἰσίοις χρόνις εὐφορίας ἀρετῆς, ὧν μὴ συμφορῶμεν, τὸν πύθω αὐτῶν γένοι ἀπὸ αὐτῆς ἡλίας περιέχον. *De Prom. & Pan. p. 929.*

De Opific. p. 17, 18. Vit. Mos. III. p. 696.

tion among the Gentiles at the same time (1).
Thus was He establish'd upon Promises

(1) Hic Vir, hic est, tibi quem promitti sæpius audis,
Augustus Cæsar, *Divum Genus* : aurea condet
Sæcula qui rursus Latio, regnata per arva
Saturno quondam : super & Garamantas & Indos
Proferet Imperium, &c.

Hujus in *adventu*, jam nunc & Caspia Regna
Responsis horrent Divum, & Mæotica tellus,
Et septem gemini turbant trepida ostia Nili. *Virg. Æn. 6.*

Aspice, *venturo letentur* ut omnia Sæclo :
Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis Ætas :
Magnus ab integro Sæclorum nascitur Ordo :
Jam redit & Virgo ; redeunt Saturnia Regna :
Jam nova Progenies cælo demittitur alto.

Tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum
Desinet ; ac toto Surget *gens aurea* mundo.

— Pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus Orbem.

— Nec magnos metuent Armenta Leones.

Occidet & Serpens, & fallax herba veneni
Occidet.

Te Duce, si qua manent, sceleris vestigia Nostri,
Irrita perpetua solvent formidine Terras.

Ille Deum Vitam accipiet, divisque videbit
Permixtos Heroas, & Ipse videbitur Illis. *Virg. Ecl. 4.*

Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum Libri
contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut invalesceret Oriens
* profectique Judæa rerum potirentur.

Tacit. Hist. L. 5. C. 2. Sect. 8.

Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus ac constans opinio ;
esse in *Fatis* ut eo tempore Judæi profecti rerum poti-
rentur. *Suet. in Vesp. C. 4.*

* Profecti Judæa rerum potirentur, seems to be but
the Latin of the Greek in *Micah* 5. 2. ἐκ οὗ ἐξελεύσεται
ὁ ἡγούμενος, Out of Thee shall come a Governor, as it is in
Matth. 2. 6. or in the Septuagint, οὗ ἐστὶν ὁ ἀρχὴς,
that there should be a Ruler. Ut invalesceret Oriens, is
a manifest Allusion to the same Translation, which ren-
ders the Word 73] the Branch (the Name ascribed
to our Saviour in the Prophets) by Ἀνατολή, the East.
See *Jer. 23. 5. Isaiah 11. 1. Jer. 33. 15, 16. Zech. 6. 12.*
Luke 1. 78.

given

given in that Law, whose Rules and Ceremonies were Typical of and Preparative to Him; And thus did He declare, by a nice Correspondence and Testimony, that He was That *Shiloh*, that very Substance, The *Logos*, the *Word*, or *Wisdom*, or Son of God, *ὁ λόγος ἦν μετὰ τὸν Θεόν*, which was the Burthen of the Prophetick, and the Joy and Glory of the Evangelick Writings. And this brings me to shew,

Thirdly, That God hath in these last Days spoken unto us by His Son.

We may see, in the laying this Scene so remote from the first Ages of the World, what a wonderful Concatenation there is in the Divine Operations, and that from *Adam* to *Moses*, and from *Moses* to the *Prophets*, the main Scope and Design of all Divine Revelation, was the gradual Discovery of the Son of God, who was the End of the Law, and of all the Promises made to the Fathers. For what was the Law of *Moses*, but only the Dawning of the Gospel, shining through a Cloud of Types and Symbolical Representations? And what are all the succeeding Prophecies of the Old Testament, but only the same Gospel still shining clearer and clearer, 'till at last it broke forth in its Meridian Brightness, and was clear'd up from an Obscure Twilight to a Perfect Day? The Law was a Shadow of Things to come, a School-master to bring us unto Christ; that is, the Ceremonial Law in general, was a Type of

the *Mysteries* reveal'd in the Gospel (1). And thus our Blessed Saviour, when, speaking of Himself, He said to the Jews, *Destroy This Temple* (2), He thereby intimated to them, that He was the true Temple God, of which *Theirs* was only a *Figure*. For this Reason it was, that St. John said, *The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ* (3). We must acknowledge, without any Hesitation, that the Brazen Serpent, which *Moses* lifted up in the Wilderness, was a *Type* and *Emblem* of the Crucifixion of our Blessed Redeemer (4), and that *Jonas's* being three Days, and three Nights, in the *Whale's Belly* (5), is only represented as a *Figure* of His Death and Resurrection.

Several *Allegories* of this kind are to be found in the Sacred Writings; as where St. Paul represents the *New Covenant* under the *Emblem* of *Sarah*, and the *Old* under that of *Hagar* (6). The Writer to the Hebrews calls the Jewish Tabernacle a *Figure* for the time present, whereby the Holy Ghost signified a greater and more perfect Tabernacle (7), under the Messiah. And thus all the Deliverances given by God to the House of *Israel*, were but Shadows, and as it were an Earnest of the Great Deliverance He intended to give by His Son, whose Nature and Substance is of an Existence ineffably Eternal. For in the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was

(1) Rom. 10. 4. Gal. 3. 24. Colos. 2. 8, 17. Heb. 10. 1.

(2) John 2. 19. (3) John 1. 17. (4) John 3. 14.

(5) Mat. 12. 39, 40. (6) Galat. 4. 24, 25. See Erasmus de Ratio. Concionandi. (7) Heb. 9. 9.

with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made. Accordingly Moses assures us, that the Father communicated with Him his Counsel of creating Man, where he says, *Let us make Man after our Image.* To the same Effect the Psalmist, *He said and they were made; He commanded, and they were created.* This is He whom the Patriarchs and Prophets in former times, both before and after Moses, beheld frequently exhibited before their Eyes in the Form of a Servant. This is the Lord God that appear'd to Abraham in a human Shape, before Whom He kneel'd, and to Whom He address'd Himself in these Words, *Shall not the Lord of the whole Earth judge Righteously?* This is that Lord that rain'd Fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah, from the Lord out of Heaven; That God who wrestled with Jacob, and from Whom He call'd the Place where they strove, *the Vision of God, because He had seen Him Face to Face.* Thus again, when He presented Himself in the Form of a Man before Joshua, He tells him the Place is sanctified by his Presence; at which Joshua falls upon his Knees, and acknowledges Him *Captain of the Host of the Lord.* So we find the Place where He talked with Moses, consecrated by His Presence; and the first Chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, of which my Text is a Part, furnishes us with sufficient Evidence for the Truth of this Doctrine. The Apostle asserts, that our Saviour is possess'd of a Nature far superior and more excellent than that of the Angels,

Angels, as He hath by Inheritance obtain'd a more excellent Name than They: For unto which of the Angels said He at any time, *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten Thee?* And let all the Angels of God worship Him. The Scope of the Apostle in this whole Chapter is to shew the great Excellency and Dignity of our Saviour's Nature; and in these words He argues, that he is therefore superior to the Angels, because He is the Son of God begotten of the Substance of His Father, very God of very God, by an Eternal Communication of the Divine Essence: And upon the Account of this ineffable Generation of the eternal Son of God, must necessarily be founded, and cannot otherwise be true, either what St. Paul asserts of Him, *That in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily* or what our Saviour testified of Himself *That He knoweth the Father; That whatsoever Things the Father doth, these doth the Son likewise; that He and His Father are one; That He is in the Father, and the Father in Him; and that all Things that the Father hath are His*

That the History of the Life of Christ contain'd in the New Testament, is a true Relation of Matters of Fact, will to a Rational Enquirer appear very credible from the concurrent Voice of all Ages. That Jesus of Nazareth liv'd formerly in Judea, and that He was Crucify'd under Pontius Pilate, in the Reign of Tiberius (1), and the remarkable

(1) Auctor Nominis ejus Christus, qui Tiberio imperitante per Procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicatus affectus erat. Tacitus, Lib. XV. See Plinius Ep. 97.

circumstances attending His Crucifixion; such as the (1) *Earthquake* and *Miraculous Darkness*, are allow'd and attested by the united Testimony of Heathen Writers. The Star that appear'd at his Birth, and the Journey of the *Chaldean* wise Men, is mention'd by *Chalcidius* the Platonist (3). And *Abul-Pharasius* tells us (4), that *Zerdusht*, or *Zoroastres*, who was the great Patriarch of the *Magians*, who wrote the Book *Zendavesta* (which is the Bible of that Sect) and whose Name is in the same Veneration among them, as that of *Moses* is among the *Jews*, and that of *Mahammed* among his Followers) foretold

(1) Περὶ τῆς ἐν τῷ Τιβερῷ καὶ οὐρανῷ ἐκλάμψεως, ἣν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔοικεν ἐξαυτῷ αὐτῷ καὶ πρὸς τῶν ἁλόν τινα γινόμενων σεισμῶν ἡ γῆς, ἀνέγχετο καὶ αὐτῷ. *Origen. adv. Cels. Lib. 2.*

(2) Τετάρτῳ δ' ἔπειτα τῆς διακοσμοῦς διυπνίσας Ὀλυμπεύς ἐγένετο ἑκλάμψις ἡλίου, μεγίστη δὲ ἐξωλεισμένων ἡμερῶν. Καὶ νύξ ὥρα ἔκρη τῆς ἡμέρας ἐγένετο, ὥς καὶ ἐν ἑσπέρῳ φανῆναι, σειςμὸς τε μέγας καὶ Βιθυλίαν καὶ τὰ πολλὰ Νικαίας κατίσχευε. *Phlegon.*

(3) Est quoque alia Sanctior & venerabilior Historia, quæ perhibet ortu Stellæ cujusdam non morbos mortis denunciatas, sed Descensum Dei venerabilis ad terrarum conservationis, rerumque mortalium Gratiæ: cum Stellam cum nocturno itinere inspexissent Chalcidius profecto sapientes viri, & consideratione rerum celestium satis exercitati, quæsisse dicuntur recentem in Dei, repertaque illa Majestate puerili veneratos & Vota Deo tanto convenientia nuncupasse.

Chalcidius in Commentario ad Timæum.

(4) Historia compendiosa Dynastiæ Gregorii Abil-
gii, p. 83. Editæ ab *Edw. Pocockie*. Oxon. 1663.

to

to his Magians the Coming of Christ, and that at the time of his Birth there should appear a wonderful Star, which should shine by Day, as well as by Night, and therefore left in Command with them, that when the Star should appear, they should follow the Directions of it, and go to the Place, where he should be born, and there offer Gifts, and pay their Adoration unto him: And that it was by this Command, that the three wise Men came from the East, that is out of Persia, to Worship Christ at *Bethlehem*. And so far (1) *Sbaristani*, tho' a Mahometan Writer doth agree with Him, as that he tells us, that *Zerdusht* (or *Zoroastres*) foretold the Coming of a wonderful Person in the latter times, who should reform the World both in Religion and Righteousness, and that Kings and Princes should become obedient to him, and give Him their Assistance in promoting the true Religion, and all the Works thereof. But what these attribute to the Prophecy of *Zoroastres* (2), others refer to the Prophecy of *Balaam* (3), who was generally reckon'd of the Eastern Magians, and say, that it was by his Prediction, that the wise Men were led by the Star to seek Christ in *Judea*, and there pay their Adoration unto Him.

And that *Herod* caus'd all the Children of *Bethlehem*, under Two Years old, to be slain, we have a very remarkable and pertinent

(1) *Religio veterum Persarum*, Cap. 31. Pag. 382.

(2) *Theodorus Tarsensis*. (3) *Numb.* 23. 10. &c.

testimony related by (1) *Macrobius*. And
 any of the Miracles which Jesus work'd in
 Life-time, are, as to Matters of Fact,
 expressly own'd by the most implacable Ene-
 mies of Christianity, as by (2) *Celsus* and
Lician, and the Authors of the *Jewish Talmud*.
 And now by the Providence of God, we
 have a New Revelation establish'd by the
 gradual Discoveries of his Dearly Beloved
 Son, upon the Ancient Promises of that very
 Law, the ceremonial Part of which He came
 to abolish. Life and Immortality is illu-
 strated, the Divine Will is clearly explain'd,
 the true and primitive Light shines in its
 original Brightness, and upon this immove-
 able Rock of our Salvation, may all the Ge-
 nerations of Believers securely build their
 Hopes to the End of the World. *Whatsoever*
Things are True, whatsoever Things are Honest,
whatsoever Things are Just, whatsoever Things
Pure, whatsoever Things are Lovely, what-
soever Things are of good Report, if there be any
virtue, if there be any thing Praise-worthy;

(1) Cum audisset (*Augustus*,) inter pueros quos in
 a *Herodes Rex Judæorum intra bimatum* jussit inter-
 filium quoque ejus occisum; ait, *Melius est Herodis*
esse quam filium. *Macrobi. Lib. 2. Cap. 4.* But
 not likely that *Herod* should have a Child so Young
 those Innocents, at that Age He was then of, in the
 fortieth Year of his Age, and Thirty-fourth of his
 Son. The Execution of His Son *Antipater*, happening
 at that very Time, being consider'd with that of
Alexander and *Aristobulus* formerly put to Death by Him,
 rather be thought to have given the Occasion for
 this Sarcasm.

(2) See the Places cited by *Grotius, de Veritat. Religio-*
siana. Lib. 2. Cap. 5.

all these, and these only, are the things that are earnestly recommended to the World in this Evangelical Dispensation. *Phil.* 4. 8. So plain, so palpable, and so sublime are the Truths, that to hear them is Pleasure, and to meditate upon them is Life: And no Man can refuse to be persuaded by them, but he that is become blind to all Conviction, and deaf to all Advice. And as the Efficacy and Example to enforce any Precepts is very Obvious, so there shines such a mutual Harmony and Consent in the Gospel and its Blessed Author, That the Doctrine is always legible in the Performance, and His Actions are the best Comment on his Religion. As his whole Life was but one continued Proof of the Reason and Equity of His Injunctions, so His Death seems in His Death to have carried the Practice of them to the most exalted and transcendent Pitch.

Thus the Books of the New Testament contain an uncommon Strain of Wisdom, and a most extraordinary Degree of Holiness. And if Integrity is necessary to render Testimony Valid, nothing can be more Authentic in this respect, than that of these several Authors. Though they do not Reason according to the Method observ'd by the Philosophers and Orators of their own, and our Age; yet there certainly reigns an excellent Solidity, and a continued Strain of good Sense through all their Writings. Besides, the things they speak of, are of such a Nature, as not to admit of any Delusion.

St. Luke's Account of the Birth of John the Baptist

otist; of His Father Zechariah's becoming
 mb in the Temple, and *Elizabeth* his Wife's
 nging forth, after she had been Barren for
 ong time, had been a mere Forgery, no-
 ng could be easier than to display the
 hood of it, and every one would have
 ghed at the Cheat. An innumerable Mul-
 ade of People, who had been Witnesses of
 Things the Apostles related were still a-
 e, so that it is highly improbable that they
 ould dare to advance in their Writings the
 t Imposture. That the Promise of sending
 urther Comforter was actually perform'd,
 we can have no clearer Demonstration than
 t Miraculous Effusion of the Holy Spirit
 n the Apostles, on the Day of *Pentecost*.
 And indeed, we have a more astonishing
 ce of History of that Stupendous Tran-
 sition, than ever did or will appear upon
 Record, in any Age or Nation of the World.
 For we are told, That *They were all fill'd with*
Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other
languages, as the Spirit gave them Utterance;
and there were at that time dwelling at Jeru-
salem, Jews, devout Men, out of every Na-
tion under Heaven; and that, when they heard
every Man in his own Language,
they were all amaz'd and marvell'd, saying one
to another, Behold, are not all these which speak
Parthians? And how hear we every Man in
his own Tongue, wherein we were Born? Par-
sians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the
Inhabitants of Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and
Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and
Lycaonia, in Egypt, and in the Parts of Lybia

*Acts. 2. 4, about Cyrene, and Strangers of Rome, Jews and
5, 6, 7, 8, Profelytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear
9, 10, 11, them speak in our Tongues the wonderful Works
of God.*

When all these Testimonies are put and consider'd together, of a Number and Variety, little less than infinite, of the most credible and sufficient Witnesses, we may be bold to pronounce, that no Transaction recorded in the most Authentick History, either Sacred or Profane, can be supported by clearer or stronger Attestations, and that no better Evidence can be either expected or desired.

It must besides be no small Satisfaction to see at one View in a Harmony, an exact Agreement between the four Evangelical Historians, who wrote the same History in different Times and Places. And manifest Advantages arise to the Impartial Reader from the seeming Difference that any where may appear in these Evangelists. This may convince us that they did not write by Concert, or by any mutual Agreement; and of the Evangelists explaining some Particulars more fully than the others have done, and some relating such and such Matters of Fact with a greater exactness, and describing them fuller with all their Circumstances, than the rest of those sacred Writers may do, we are hereby induc'd to read all the four Gospels which we should be apt to neglect, when they all exactly alike. And this leads me to shew,

Fourthly and Lastly, That the Evangelical Revelation of the Son of God is highly Advantageous to the State and Condition of Man.

The Condition Mankind was in at the Time of *Jesus Christ's* Appearance in the World, may very fitly be represented under the Idea of a Person afflicted with a deadly Distemper; and the Coming of our Blessed Redeemer be consider'd as the Critical Time, which was to decide either the Death or Cure of that diseas'd Person. What therefore *John the Baptist* said of the *Jewish Nation*, that *the Ax was laid unto the Root of the Tree*, hath in other Words been said by *St. Paul*, of all the Inhabitants of the World. *The Wrath of God is reveal'd from Heaven against all Ungodliness, and Unrighteousness of Men, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness.* For the Characters, which God had imprinted of Himself in the Minds of Men, were then most deplorably effaced, and His Glory was transferr'd to the basest and most wicked Parts of the Creation. Idolatry prevail'd universally in all Nations, and notwithstanding Men did indeed know God, so as to be without Excuse; yet they did not like to retain Him in their Knowledge, but became vain in their Imaginations; and their foolish Heart was ^{Rom. 1.} darkned, and they changed the Glory of the un-^{21, and} ^{28.} corruptible God into Images of vilest Creatures. Temples were erected to sanctifie Lewdness and Intemperance; and, the Almighty Creator of all Things being unobserved, Things which

which had no Existence in Nature were made the Objects of Religious Worship. And indeed it is no wonder, that since the Heathens worship'd for their Gods, Monsters of Uncleanness, and of all Kinds of Injustice, they should give themselves up to the most enormous Vices. There are Accounts enough Extant, of the Universal Corruption, Lewdness, and Debauchery of the Heathen World, and (1) the Complaints of their own Writers so abundantly confirm it, that *it is a Shame for Us, so much as to speak of those Things which were done of them, not only in Secret, but even in the most publick Manner.*

And on the other Hand, the Jewish Nation, that had been so highly Favour'd by Almighty God, was neither more Holy, nor less Vicious, than the Rest of the World. We do not find indeed, that they were ever guilty of Idolatry, after their Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity; but they had fallen into several other heinous Crimes, whereby they no less deserved the Wrath of God, or the Compassion of the great Lover and Physician of Souls. Though God had by a special Favour, committed His Holy Oracles to them, yet they had been so ungrateful as to slight and neglect so valuable a Treasure. For after the Gift of Prophecy ceased among them, and their Rabbins and Scribes came to interpret and comment on the Sa-

(1) *Egregium sanctumq; virum si cerno, bimembri
Hoc monstrum Puero, vel Miranti sub Aratro
Piscibus Inventis, & sætæ comparo Mulæ.*

Juvenal. Sat. 13.

red Writings, they Adulterated them to that Degree, that they render'd them of no Effect, by their false Glosses and Traditionary Expositions. They made the Essence of their Religion to consist in Ceremonies, while they trod under Foot the weightier Matters of the Law; and their Worship was resolv'd into a set of formal Shews and hypocritical Pageantry. He that was but exact in Tything Mint, Annise, and Cummin, that fasted twice a Week, and for a pretence, made long Prayers, tho' at the same time He neglected the more weighty Duties of the Law, Truth, Justice and Mercy; yet was He Righteous to all Intents and Purposes, and could say to His Neighbour, in the Superciliousness of His Heart, Come not near me, for I am Holier than Thou. Thus were they puffed up with Arrogance and Pride at this their specious Outside, and for having a Law, which would indeed have promoted their Glory and Happiness, they had stuck to the true Sense of it. But they hereby fancy'd that they had a right to hate and despise the Rest of Mankind, with whom They agreed in no one Point, but in an Extream Corruption of Manners.

Such then was the Inability of Human Means, for reforming the Morals and Tempers of Mankind in general, even tho' Learning is at the same time acknowledged, to have flourished beyond any Age, that there was plainly wanting a farther Revelation of the Divine Will to direct Mankind what Course to steer to obtain the Harbour. And this

this is the Great Glory, and the Great Benefit of the Evangelical Dispensation, whose Precepts are most accurately adapted to our Nature, and are every ways tending to raise it to the Highest Dignity, and to make us Perfect, even as God is Perfect. We have a System and Summary of all Moral Instructions in this Scheme, and the most incomparable Rules for Government, Society, and Friendship, are herein very emphatically laid down. We are taught Obedience to our Governors and Superiors, and the greatest Mercy, Love and Humanity one to another. There is no Friendship so Sacred, no Justice so Impartial, no Charity so Great, no Meekness so Exemplary, as that which our Blessed Saviour has recommended to us. He is a Prophet, as mighty in Deed as in Word; being both the Way and the Light, the Road and the Guide, the Precept and the Example, and whose whole Life was but one continued Proof of the Reason and Equity of His Injunctions. All the Divine Commands are as so many Acts of Grace to Mankind, every Branch of our Duty affords Pleasure and Satisfaction, and the Performance of it will make us rejoice in the Testimony of our Consciences, That in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity, we have had our Conversation in the World.

All other Institutions of Morality, fall as much short of the foregoing Recommendation, as even their Compilers did of those faint Rules of Virtue, which they enjoined their Profelytes. The Philosophers indeed, shew'd the Beauty of Virtue; They set Her

off

so as to draw Men's Eyes and Approbation to Her; But leaving Her Unendow'd, very few were willing to Espouse Her. And 'tis not strange, that the Learned Heathens satisfied not Many with their Airy Commendations of Her being the Perfection and Excellency of our Nature; of Her Being Her Self a Reward, and that Her Character, like a true Medal, acquires Value and Veneration by its Age. But this poor extent of Happiness is by no means commensurate either to the Desire or End of our Being. Upon the Foundation of Heaven and Hell, and upon this only, Morality stands firm, and may defy all Competition. This makes it more than a Name; A Substantial Good, worth all our Aims and Endeavours; And thus the Gospel of Jesus Christ has delivered it to us.

We are now no longer under a trembling Uncertainty about our Immortality, our Eternal and Infinite Duration, our Future State; we may now venture boldly into the Cave of Death, and trample upon all the Terrors of the Grave. Rewards and Punishments are clearly taught, such as no Thought can conceive, or Eloquence express. For all the Advantages of human Learning could never determine any thing in this Point.

(1) Among the most refined Wits of the Gentile World, we meet with nothing but weak

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(1) Ἐμοὶ μὲν ἀποδανέμεται ὑμῖν ἡ βιωσασμένη; ὁ πό-
 ρος ὃ ἡμῶν ἔρχεται ὅτι ἀμεινον πρῶγμα, ἀδύλοι πάντες
 ἄλλοι ἢ πρὸς τοῦτο. Plato in Apolog. Socr.

Reasonings, and dubious Resolutions about the Souls Existence after Death. Their Thoughts of another Life were at best obscure, and their Expectations uncertain. Of *Manes*, and Ghosts, and the Shades of departed Men, there was some talk, but little certain, and less minded. They had the Names of *Styx* and *Acheron*; Of *Elysian Fields*, and Seats of the Blessed: But they had them generally from their Poets, mixed with their Fables. And so they looked more like the Inventions of Wit, and Ornament of Poetry, than the serious Perswasions of the Grave and the Sober. (1) Some of them indeed, by a close Application of their Minds to Study, and a frequent Exercise of the Reason, have had fresh Springs of Thought, and have seem'd to be mounted to the Height of Inspiration: But when the pleasing Heat began to cool, when the entertaining Rapture languish'd and went off, the

Νῦν δ' εἰς τὴν οἴαν παρ' ἀνδράσιν ἐλπίζω ἀφ' ἑλπίδων
ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τὴν μὲν ἐκ αὐτοῦ πάνυ δι' ἡμετέρας. *Plato in Phæd.*

ἔτι δ' αὖ οἷον ἀποδημόντι ἐστὶν ἡ θάνατος ἐνθάδε
ἄλλον τίπον, καὶ ἀληθῆ ὅτι τὰ λεγόμενα, ὡς ἀγαθὰ
εἰσὶ πάντες οἱ τεθνηῶτες, &c. *Plato in Apolog. Socr.*

(1) Οὐ τοι ἔγωγε, ὦ παῖδες, ἐν τῷ τῷ πᾶσι
δυν, ὡς ἢ ψυχῇ, ὡς αὖ ἐν θνητῷ σώματι ἢ ζῆν
ἢ τῷ ἀπαλλαγῇ, τίθνηται. Οὐδέ γε ὅπως ἀν
ἔσται ἢ ψυχῇ ἐπὶ τῷ σώματι, ὡς αὖ ἐν τῷ σώματι
ἐν τῷ σώματι. Ἀλλ' ὅταν ἀκέραιος καὶ ἁγνός
ὅς τις ἐκκεῖθεν, τοῖς καὶ φρονιμώτατοι εἰσὶν ἀνδρες
Cyrus apud Xen.

would freely own the Uncertainty of their Speculations. *Pythagoras*, the first of all the Greeks that taught the Immortality of the Soul, corrupted it with a Mixture of the *Indian Philosophy*, and made it to consist in (1) an Eternal Transmigration of the Soul from one Body to another. Among the Romans, (2) *Tully* discourses admirably of the Happiness and Immortality of the Soul, but always in a Cloud. (3) He understood the Dignity and Desireableness of the Argument, but with all His Penetration, He could not see through the Doubts that hover'd round it. Neither He, nor (4) *Seneca*, could affirm

(1) *Porphyrius* in *Vita Pythagoræ*, P. 17. Edit. *Cantabr.* & *Iamblicus* & *Diogenes Laërtius* in *Vita ejusdem*.

(2) Quid multa? Sic mihi persuasi, sic sentio; quum tanta celeritas animorum sit, tanta memoria præteritorum, futurorum Providentia, tot Artes, tantæ Scientiæ, tot inventa; non posse eam Naturam, quæ res eas conlineat, esse mortalem. *Cic. de Senectute. Vid. Tusc. Quæst. Lib. 1.*

(3) Ea, quæ vis, ut potero, explicabo; nec tamen quasi Pythius Apollo, certa ut sint & fixa quæ dixerò; sed ut homunculus unus e Multis, probabilis conjectura sequens. Ultra enim quo progrediâr quam ut verimilia videam, non habeo. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. Lib. 1.*

Harum Sententiarum, quæ vera sit, Deus aliquis videt; quæ verisimillima, magna Quæstio est. *Idem, ibid.*

Et si nihil nimis oportet confidere. Movemur enim sepe aliquo acute concluso: labamus mutamusque Sententiam clarioribus etiam in Rebus; in his est enim aliqua Obscuritas. *Idem, ibid.*

Nescio quomodo dum lego, assentior; cum posui verbum, & mecum ipse de immortalitate animorum cæpi cogitare, assensio omnis illa elabitur. *Idem, ibid.*

(4) Credebam facile Opinionebus magnorum Virorum, rem gratissimam [*animæ immortalitatem*] promissum magis quam probantium. *Senec. Epist. 102.*

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any thing with Certainty in these Points. The (1) *Epicureans* disputed against the Immortality of the Soul; and their Philosophy soon produced the Heresy of the *Sadducees*, a great, a learned, and a considerable Sect among the Jews, who wholly deny'd the Existence of Spirits, and the Life to come. But now, by the Appearance of the Sun of Righteousness amongst Men, it may truly be said, That Life and Immortality is brought to Light by the Gospel, and that not only in the clear Revelation of it, and in Instances shewn of Men rais'd from the Dead, but by an Unquestionable Assurance and Pledge of it, in our Saviour's own Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven. So that tho' the Law of Na-
 Heb. 7. 19. ture, or of Moses made nothing perfect, yet the bringing in of a better Hope by the Gospel did.

(1) — Si immortalis natura animai est,
 Et sentire potest secreta a Corpore nostro;
 Quinq; (ut opinor) eam faciundum est sensibus auctam
 Nec ratione alia nosmet proponere Nobis
 Possumus infernas Animas Acherunte vagare:
 Pictores itaque & Scriptorum sæcla priora
 Sic Animas introduxerunt sensibus auctas.
 At neque Seorsum Oculi, &c. —
 Nec sensus ipsi seorsum consistere possunt,
 Naribus atque Manu, atque Oculis, atque Auribus, atque
 Lingua; nec per se possunt sentire, nec esse.

Lucret. Lib. 3.

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Lib. 7